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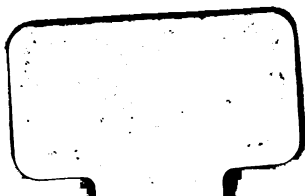
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THE
LION IN THE PATH

An Historical Romance.

BY

THE AUTHORS OF "ABEL DRAKE'S WIFE"
AND "GIDEON'S ROCK."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

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CHAPMAN & HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
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*"THE ATHENÆUM" AND "THE
LION IN THE PATH."*

A CHAPTER ILLUSTRATIVE OF CONTEMPORARY
CRITICISM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ABEL DRAKE'S WIFE."

For the first time I am about, as an author, to answer publicly a Reviewer, whose criticism has appeared in a literary paper of the highest distinction. To that paper, as I am bound honestly to own, I am indebted for much of whatever success my previous books have obtained.

No justification therefore of my course—in a prudential or even in a self-respecting point of view—can be given by mere words: the justification must appear in the facts, if at all. To the facts, then, I commend the attention of all who may honour these pages with a perusal.

My first impulse on reading the criticism was to write a letter to the Editor, furnishing him, as I supposed, with absolute evidences of the Reviewer's untrustworthiness; by showing that in every specific statement or suggestion as to matters of fact he was, wrong. But I expressed no such opinion, used no

such words. I merely arranged the facts before him without a trace of disrespect, or sarcasm, or hostile feeling, of any kind. That letter the Editor has suppressed without comment or explanation, or this chapter would have remained unwritten.

It is but the Christian's duty to return good for evil; so I will in this at least try to be an exemplary Christian, and answer the *Athenæum's* suppression of my letter by the reprint of every word of its Reviewer's attack. To keep it clear from my comment, and to give it even greater prominence, I print it in italics, with no more numerical divisions than I find indispensable for convenience of reply.

1.—"*THE LION IN THE PATH may be briefly described as a novel with many plots but no plot.*"

Not two, but three birds are thus neatly despatched with one stone: *i.e.* the Novel, Mr. Tom Taylor's play of "Clancarty," and Lord Macaulay's history. For the Novel and the Play have exactly the same basis,—the child marriage; while it is Lord Macaulay who thinks so highly of this "*no plot*" as to commend it in his history to the attention of the Novelist and Dramatist.

It is true that neither Mr. Tom Taylor nor myself used the subsequent political history of the boy-bridegroom; for it appears to have been undis-

tinguished if not discreditable. We have (and, as Mr. Taylor has shown in answering a letter of mine in the *Times*, without concert or knowledge of each other's plans,) substituted for his actual career a leadership in the interesting and tragic events of the attempted Jacobite insurrection against King William in 1695—6; and we both made him perform the same chivalrous act, in that capacity, of denouncing to the King, the under-plot for his murder, which a few of the more desperate among his associate-insurrectionists secretly attempted. Such is the story which Macaulay has told in two different places, and disconnectedly; but which in "*Clancarty*" and, in "*The Lion in the Path*," are brought together, and fused into one.

As to the truth about "*Many plots but no plot*," I will take, so far as it goes, the narrative given by another contemporary, founded on exactly the same materials as the *Athenæum* Reviewer had before him:—

"*The Many Plots, But No Plot.*"

"The tale," says the *Graphic*, "is one of Jacobite conspiracy in the year 1695, and for the incident on which it is founded—the child-marriage—the authors acknowledge their obligations to Lord Macaulay's History. Towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second the hero, the son and heir to Viscount Langton, has, at the age of fifteen, been married to his favourite playmate, the Lady Hermia, daughter of the Earl of Bridgeminster, then no more than eleven. The object of the Earl, one of the craftiest politicians of the day, was to secure his position and advance his influence by an alliance with a leading Catholic nobleman, known to stand high in

the confidence and favour of the coming king, James the Second. The two children are separated immediately after the ceremony, and this separation threatens to be a long one, for when fortune frowns on the Stuarts the Earl of Bridgeminster is prompt to transfer his allegiance and betray his friend, who follows his royal master into exile. Fourteen years have passed when the hero determines, at whatever hazard, to visit England, and at least see his wife, even if he cannot win her to share his lot. With this private errand he is persuaded, though most reluctantly, to couple a political mission imposed on him by the exiled monarch, to confer with the leading English Jacobites, and consult with them on the prospects of a rising. So, armed with proper credentials packed up in a mysterious walking-stick, and disguised as Daniel Sterne, merchant and dealer in laces and precious stones, he sets sail for England in a small fishing-smack; and commences the series of strange and perilous adventures and escapes of which the book consists."

So far the *Graphic*. I continue the story myself, omitting the subsidiary matters:—

Langton first visits an important civic man, seemingly to sell to him the goods he had brought over; but this person has been in former days a Jacobite, and incurred great obligations to the Langton family. To him he tells his errand, but is persuaded by the alarmed Mercer to pause and look around him at the improving state of England, before he lets loose the furies of civil war. The General consents; and after having once seen his wife at the play, uses the leisure thus forced upon him to visit her secretly in the country, in the guise of a diamond merchant. When he leaves her he finds the earl and his retainers on his track, who had been warned of his presence. At the same time the wife discovers who had been her visitor, and acts with such courage and spirit as to be the means of saving his life.

From that time Langton addresses himself resolutely to preparations for the business of his mission, conscious that he is ever sought for by the agents of Government. A great Jacobite meet-

ing is held under cover of a masquerade ; where Langton raises the hearts of all present to enthusiasm by showing himself in the uniform of a French general, armed with authority from Louis to promise a French army, if only personal guarantees—hostages, in fact—are given by the leading Jacobites.

This is done, and all parties set to work to prepare for the insurrection. Suddenly, Langton discovers that an under-plot for the murder of King William is going on under the very shelter of his plot and name and position. He denounces this to William, concealing his own name and quality, but avowing boldly he is a rebel. He also takes every possible security for the personal safety of the men concerned, should they stop in time.

To influence them to stop, he calls for the same day a grand meeting of all the principal Jacobites concerned in the insurrection, meaning then and there to raise the banner of James ; hoping to find the murder-plot had been thus effectually checked by the men implicated feeling themselves constrained to attend the meeting.

But they do not come. The murder-plot goes on till it bursts in failure ; and then Langton vainly strives to induce the other Jacobites to obey his call to arms !

The meeting, while in confusion through the failure of the murder-plot, and through Langton's acknowledged share in exposing it, is surrounded by Government troops, but Langton escapes. He then devotes his whole soul to getting a secret interview with his wife. He succeeds, and spends the night with her ; but is arrested in her very bed-room by her brother, and carried away to the Tower. There, after every other attempt to save his life has failed, Lady Russell intervenes ; and her position and claims are so great upon the King, that at last she succeeds, and he is banished.

This may be a tale of "*many plots, but no plot,*" but if the Reviewer happens to know of a few more of the same kind, and would make them known to me, I should be very much obliged to him.

2.—*"From the beginning to the end of the book everybody is apparently engaged in trying to outwit everybody else ; and as all, or nearly all, the Jacobite spies prove to be in the pay of King William's Government, and vice versâ, and every spy has another spy behind his back to spite him,—we get into a hopeless confusion as to who wants what, and merely derive a sort of general idea that, if things were really what this book describes, there must have been more lies told in England during the reign of the Deliverer than in all the rest of the world since history was. The lies, too, are, for the most part, rather purposeless ; and are well typified by an ingeniously-contrived stick which the hero of the story, a Jacobite nobleman, possesses. This instrument is cunningly devised, so as to render it impossible for any one to open it and discover the secret despatches which it contains ; but as soon as it falls into the hands of King William's head detective, that astute functionary solves the difficulty by incontinently breaking it over his knee. Of much the same nature are most of the plots and counterplots described in these volumes ; they are far more troublesome to invent than they are to discover, and when they are discovered, very little comes of it. Why anybody does anything—from the first chapter, where the hero and heroine are married in their childhood and immediately separated, to the last, where the former, being under sentence of death, is*

visited in prison by the widow of Lord Russell, who appears then for the first time,—it is quite impossible for the reader to discern. No reason is ever assigned for the early marriage or the resulting separation; the only use of it, apparently, is to enable the hero, General Langton (who, by the way, is a general in the French army at twenty-nine), to visit the heroine, some fifteen years later, in her bed-chamber without impropriety."

As to the breaking of the stick, the spy, who had discovered or suspected the nature of its contents, and who had treacherously hidden it, had of course given a hint to her chief, as to its importance:—see her dying confession, vol. iii. p. 246.

Passing over for the present the remarks about "*everybody engaged in trying to outwit everybody else*"—about "*spies,*" "*lies,*" "*plots,*" and "*counter-plots,*" I have something here to make known that may clear up the mystery why any authors of decent repute should write in this fashion if the Reviewer speaks truly; or why any decent Reviewer should make such misstatements if he speaks untruly. My explanation will greatly simplify matters, and I doubt if any one will be more interested in it than the Reviewer.

That "*we*" may "*get into a hopeless confusion as to who wants what,*" etc.; that the same "*we*" may

think it "*quite impossible*" for "*the reader to discern*" why "*anybody does anything from the first chapter . . . to the last,*" is chiefly remarkable for the fact that the statements appear in such a paper as the *Athenæum*. The oddity would be if the Reviewer had been honestly able to say the reverse. Only he must here permit me to make a little correction of his mistake in using the word "*reader,*" when he merely meant "*reviewer.*" A "*reader*" reads:—a reviewer of the present class does not, as I will presently prove to his entire satisfaction.

But he may think consecutive reading no part of his duty; but if so I put it to him as an amiable and straightforward gentleman, should he not have added that slight fact to his criticism; so that if any benefit accrued to the unlucky authors his magnanimity would have shone out in spontaneously according it?

He says—twice over in effect—so impressed is he with the weight of his remark, that "*no reason is ever assigned for the early marriage or the resulting separation,*" having asserted just before in still stronger language "*it is quite impossible for the reader to discern*" why the "*hero and heroine are married in their childhood, and immediately separated,*"

At the risk of raising a blush on the Reviewer's modest cheek, I am compelled to ask whether he really means what he appears to say—that the boy of

fifteen and girl of eleven should at once have lived together as man and wife? Or does he merely mean, but is not happy in saying so, to refer to their more permanent separation, the cause of which, he says, it is impossible for the reader to discern? Suppose we take it in all ways, thus:—*first*, the cause of the early marriage—*second*, of the immediate—and *third*, of the permanent separation: but changing the order for convenience.

"*The reader*" then already knows the pair must SEPARATE IMMEDIATELY, and in secrecy, as they have met in secrecy, because the marriage itself takes place, as shown in the opening paragraphs of the story, under circumstances that make concealment imperative.

As to "*why*" they "*married*," "*the reader*" reads at page 6, vol. i.,—"During the rest of the service she [the child-bride] behaved with a sweetness of restraint so unconscious and fresh as to touch every heart there, and make them [the bystanders] for the first time think more of the results of the MARRIAGE to the children themselves, than of THOSE POLITICAL MOTIVES FOR WHICH IT HAD BEEN PLANNED AND SOLEMNIZED."

"*The reader*" reads also in the very next page in regard to the PERMANENT SEPARATION, "fourteen years have come and gone, and the halves of that broken coin" (which the bride and bridegroom had

broken and divided between them as a little marriage rite of their own) "have never met since that memorable June morning. Rather than they should ever meet, the Earl, who had brought about the marriage, would himself have ran his sword through the honest heart that had received his child's troth that morning with a joy and solemnity beyond his years. Why was this? MERELY THAT THE POLITICIAN HAD CHANGED SIDES, AND IN DOING SO BETRAYED THE FRIEND WHO HAD TRUSTED HIM."

"*The reader*" reads lastly, in the same volume, an account of the whole transaction in full detail, narrated by the bride's father; a narrative that occupies some two pages (see 241 to 243), and the pith of which has been shown in the *Graphic's* accurate narrative, taken from those very pages.

It will now therefore be understood that the Reviewer's complaints of "*hopeless confusion*" simply mean that, not having read the book, he finds it difficult to understand it. The facts naturally present themselves to his mind as the bits of glass in a kaleidoscope would present themselves to an ignorant observer if shown apart from the inventor's arrangement for their display. The comical thing is, why the Reviewer should have imagined any other result under the conditions.

Certain very little matters seem to have greatly

exercised the Reviewer's mind, as he passed with airy grace his flying fingers over the book. It will be a real pleasure to me if I can clear these things up for him; while he will, of course, be delighted. If he is right in his censures, *that* is a pleasure. If he is wrong, but is shown the right, that must be, to a philosopher and a moralist, a greater satisfaction still.

The first then of his minor objections,—these querulous diminutives—expresses his surprise to find *Langton* "*a general in the French army at twenty-nine.*"

Well, it is early. But what if political reasons made the promotion of English Jacobite noblemen of military skill desirable just then? What if the French also wanted generals badly at the time; almost as badly as when at a later period they sent General Napoleon Bonaparte to conquer Italy at the age of TWENTY-SIX?

Again the Reviewer is so in love with his work as to repeat it, as great artists are wont to do. Having previously said it is quite impossible for the reader to discern why Lady Russell should appear for the first time in the story when she comes to the prison, he now adds:—

3.—"*Nor is it easier to see why Lady Russell was*

selected as the dea ex machinâ to bring about General Langton's escape from execution."

Perhaps not for our Reviewer ; but anybody else will, I think, be quite content to know the authors followed in this matter history and Macaulay, with respectful deference to so illustrious a martyr's known life. She DID then come into the "Clancarty" business for the first time. She DID then act the part which the Reviewer is so astonished to find assigned to her.

4.—"After this, it is not surprising that we should have to profess our complete ignorance as to the person who is indicated by the title. Was General Langton the lion in the king's path, or the king in his? Or was it the lady who is the real, though not the ostensible, heroine,—a certain Mistress Maria Modena Preston, Jacobite and Williamite spy, betraying both sides by turns, and making herself generally disagreeable? We cannot say. Possibly this want of connection is owing to the multiple authorship of the book. We fancy that we can detect two styles : and, possibly, it was the business of one author to get the characters into scrapes, and of the other to get them out again. This would account for the extraordinary fashion in which everyone, as we have already said, lies at least 'two deep'; but it does not conduce to the making of a consistent story."

As the Reviewer is here simply displaying his wit at the expense of the unhappy authors, I, as one of them, wince and pass on; asking the present reader whether he has perceived the alleged inconsistency in the story previously given. Let me, however, express my admiration of the sort of wit:—Playing about us as gently and sweetly as summer lightning; and equally suggestive of the softness and harmlessness of the hemisphere from which it springs.

5.—“ *We wonder, and it is the more remarkable as they have got Lord Russell’s name right, why the authors call an earl’s only son Lord Cecil Bridgeminster; and, still more, how, as a consequence of his father’s being made a duke, he should become ‘Earl of Norwood in his own right.’* ”

Fully appreciating the compliment to one’s sagacity in calling “Lord Russell” by his right name,—the only name by which one usually hears of him in history; a compliment conveyed, too, so delicately, as if, like a beautiful maiden, it was almost afraid of its own dangerous charms,—I hasten to allay the Reviewer’s wonder; merely premising, what a light would break in upon him if he ever should take it into his head to seek for an author’s intention before criticising it. The explanation of the “Lord Cecil Bridgeminster”

mystery is simply this :—It was convenient to keep the reader in mind that the two Bridgeminsters were father and son, without confusing his or her mind by speaking of both under the same or very similar appellations. I supposed, therefore (without going deeply into the matter), the family name and title to be the same; and that at some time or other in the family's past history, an additional name as prefix had been assumed; or had been taken with the creation of a title, before the higher title of earl was obtained, in some such way as the Earl of Wilton's eldest son became Viscount Grey de Wilton.

As to the second point, I quote the passage from the novel: "And that moment [the arrest and imprisonment of Langton in the Tower, through Lord Cecil] so long hoped for by the King . . . came at last. . . . 'You bring us welcome news, young man,' said William. 'Lord Cecil no more by courtesy, but the Earl of Norwood in your own right; [a title conferred on you] as son of the Duke of Bridgeminster, to whom we now again confirm the sequestrated [Norwood] estates of this rebel," etc. Your *if* is notoriously a great peace-maker; but the Reviewer thinks to raise an *as* to an equal pre-eminence in strife. I meant exactly what is *now* expressed in the second edition of the novel, by the addition of the words in brackets. I must confess to some negligence in allowing the original sentence to

escape me in the hurry of proof reading at the last.

6.—"*But, seeing that the authors ascribe certain lines of Marvell's to 'Andrew Maxwell,' we are led to fear that they are not particularly accurate observers; and this gives us hope that their picture of English veracity at the end of the seventeenth century may be, to some extent, unfounded.*"

Andrew Maxwell! Can one who obviously is a *particularly accurate observer*, have mistaken a printer's, for an author's error? Shade of Minerva, by whatever name thou mayst be known—forbid! I turn to the novel in wonder and dismay. Ah, yes! There are the fatal words—never again to be erased from one's brain; but rather burnt into one's escutcheon (if one has such a thing), as a sign of shame where the sign of honour should be. But from what source did the unlucky verses come? That puzzled me for some time to discover. But eventually certain dim recollections caused me to turn over the pages of Charles Knight's "London," where I found in the sixth volume a paper on our "Public Statues." This paper comprises much gossip about Marvell as a poet. He seems, indeed, to have been a favourite with the writer of the paper.

It was from that I quoted (not having the original by me) the lines in question, beginning

"With the Turk in his head, and the Pope in his heart,"

in connection with the Whitehall statue of James the Second.

If now the Reviewer will kindly look at the list of contributors, he will find that the author of that paper is the same as the writer who now asks him—whether he really thinks the best and most appropriate standard by which to measure an author's knowledge, is a reviewer's want of it?

But let us do justice though the skies fall. The Reviewer convicts the book of one crime, for which to find a parallel one must go back to him who spoke disrespectfully of the equator. The authors have actually laid sacrilegious hands on that ark of Time which carried aloft, through the surging seas of falsehood which history presents to us, the blessed gospel of Truth. They have actually doubted the "*veracity*" of the seventeenth century; and have dared to show it indirectly through its actors as something very much the reverse.

To this charge the Reviewer attaches so much weight that it forms his beginning, his middle, and his end. Well, I do not deny the impeachment. And taking it for granted that, when one person called a reviewer attacks, in a publication like the

Athenæum, other persons called authors, for their views of history, he *must* be accurate in his knowledge as to the facts at least, I have of late sat down in a very humble spirit, with this gentleman's remarks for my guiding light, to study Macaulay's history a second time, and I now present him with the results.

By "*veracity*," no doubt he means what Macaulay means in a certain passage where he says, "VERACITY, UPRIGHTNESS, and MANLY BOLDNESS, were then, as now, qualities eminently English. But those qualities, though widely diffused among the great body of the people, were seldom to be found in the class with which William was best acquainted :"* *i.e.*, with the entire governing class, including the aristocracy, and their dependents and hangers on, with which almost alone the book deals. So again, Macaulay says in reference to the Jesuitical influence on the time, "to deceit was given a license sufficient to destroy the whole value of human contracts, and of human testimony." (i., p. 345.)

Then, tracing the growth of the evil, he says:—"From the time of the Restoration to the time of the Revolution, neglect and fraud had been almost constantly impairing the efficiency of every depart-

* Macaulay's History : edition of 1864, in four vols. ; vol. ii., p. 271. All subsequent quotations are from this book unless otherwise expressed.

ment of the Government. Honours and public trusts, peerages, baronetcies, regiments, frigates, embassies, Government commissionerships, leases of crown lands, contracts for clothing, for provisions, for ammunition, pardons for murder, for robbery, for arson, were sold at Whitehall scarcely less openly than asparagus at Covent Garden, or herrings at Billingsgate. Brokers had been incessantly plying for custom in the purlieus of the Court; and of these brokers the most successful had been, in the days of Charles, the harlots, and in the days of James, the priests. From the palace, which was the chief seat of this pestilence, the taint had diffused itself through every office, and through every rank in every office, and had everywhere produced feebleness and disorganization." (ii., p. 271.) If these are the Reviewer's VERACITIES, what must be his UNVERACITIES?

But the Reviewer, perhaps, thinks William changed all this state of things? Certainly he did not become a pensioner of the French king like his two predecessors, but as to the rest, let us see:—"In general, he [William] was indulgent, nay, wilfully blind, to the baseness of the English statesmen whom he employed. He suspected, indeed he knew, that some of his servants were in correspondence with his competitor [James], and yet he did not punish them, did not disgrace them, did not even

frown on them. . . . He knew them too well to complain because he did not find in them 'VERACITY,' FIDELITY, CONSISTENCY, DISINTERESTEDNESS. The very utmost that he expected from them was that they would serve him without serious danger to themselves." (iii., p. 311.)

That something could be said for William, even under these circumstances, nobody has shown more strongly than De Foe, in the following verses, as quoted by Macaulay; but then it only makes things worse for the veracity of the "end of the seventeenth century," to which the Reviewer acts as guardian angel.

"We blame the King that he relies too much
On strangers, Germans, Huguenots, and Dutch;
And seldom does his great affairs of state
To English counsellors communicate.
The fact might very well be answered thus,
He has too often been betrayed by us.
He must have been a madman to rely
On English gentlemen's fidelity.
The foreigners have faithfully obeyed him,
And none but Englishmen have e'er betrayed him."

DE FOE—"True Born Englishman." Part II.

I may here remark that one of the first things that tempted me to deal with the subject of the novel was the idea of placing as the hero, among such men, a truthful, high-minded, chivalrous nobleman; devoted to the Jacobite cause through senti-

ment and family antecedents, rather than from intellectual conviction ; and accidentally preserved from the ordinary influences of the time by his exile, and by his very early admission into the French army. I thought it could hardly be otherwise than interesting to put an honest man into important political and revolutionary connection with such a time ; and see how he would acquit himself, and what would be his fate.

If, indeed, I am opening a new world to the Reviewer, in opening to him the pages of Macaulay, I congratulate him on the pleasure of a first acquaintance with a book so full of interesting and picturesque details ; and for his sake I therefore may, perhaps, enlarge my quotations beyond the actual necessities of the case, secure at least of his indulgence. Suppose then we run swiftly together through the VERACITIES of the chief men of the period, beginning with the Church, and Compton, Bishop of London,—one of those seven bishops who secretly signed an invitation to the Prince of Orange. Compton being questioned by James as to the fact, "his conscience—not a very enlightened conscience—would not suffer him, it seems, to utter a direct falsehood. 'Sir,' he said, 'I am quite confident that there is not one of my brethren who is not as guiltless as myself in this matter.'" "I

fully acquit you all," said the deceived King. But the next day, when the Primate and two other bishops who had *not* signed the invitation were questioned in Compton's presence, the former replied, "I can have but one King at one time. I have not invited the Prince over, and I do not believe that a single one of my brethren has done so." Crew and Cartwright said the same. When Compton had again to speak, "he parried the question with an adroitness which a Jesuit might have envied—'I gave your Majesty my answer yesterday.'" (ii., pp. 152, 153.)

Now as to the statesmen:—

Shrewsbury, while a minister to King William, offering his services to King James. (iii. p. 169.)

Clarendon, deserting King James, joining King William, advising him to make James a prisoner; subsequently plotting for James's restoration. (ii. pp. 179, 201; iii. p. 164.)

Dartmouth, one of the first persons to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, then, as a Jacobite, planning to betray Portsmouth to the French. (iii. 243.)

Godolphin, "protected, trusted, caressed," by William as his first Commissioner of the Treasury, when tempted by Jacobite agents, declaring himself a "devoted servant of King James." (iii., p. 260.)

Marlborough, already through the revolution

"one of the great men of England, high in the state, high in the army," and having been created an earl, did not wait to be tempted, but proffered his help to the Jacobite cause; and being required to furnish full information touching the strength and distribution of all the divisions of the English army, he complied. (iii., pp. 260, 261.)

Wharton, Comptroller of the Household, etc. "His mendacity and his effrontery passed into proverbs. OF ALL THE LIARS OF HIS TIME, he was the most deliberate, the most inventive, and the most circumstantial." (iv., p. 38.)

Rochester, made Privy Councillor by William, a statesman, stooping, in behalf of King James at an earlier period, "to the wicked and shameful part of a procurer, and calling in his wife to aid him in that dishonourable office; yet, in his moments of leisure, retiring to his closet, and there secretly pouring out his soul to God, in penitent tears and devout ejaculations." (i., p. 353.)

Sunderland, minister to all three Kings, and, perhaps, the most conspicuous and most infamous of all the statesmen of the time. Of him I transcribe only two short, but sufficient phrases from Macaulay's long account,—"ever false;" "his usual restless perfidy." (i., pp. 123 and 132.) He, I may add, is the child-bride's father of the true Clancarty story, and the original of the Bridgeminster of the novel.

Lastly come the lawyers:—

Guildford, who as Chief Justice "was party to some of the foulest judicial murders recorded in our history. He had sense enough to perceive from the first, that Oates and Bedloe were impostors," but "while he was in secret drawing up a refutation of the whole romance of the Popish plot, he declared in public that the truth of the story was as plain as the sun in heaven." Such was the man whom Charles the Second "raised to the highest post in the law." (i., p. 181.)

Sir Robert Wright, made Chief Justice by James the Second, a man who "had resorted to infamous ways of raising money, and had on one occasion made a false affidavit in order to obtain possession of five hundred pounds." (ii., p. 55.)

Williams, who had been the enemy and victim of King James's Government, being "driven to extremity," did that "which to a man of strong principles or high spirit, would have been more dreadful than beggary, imprisonment, or death" . . . he sold himself to that Government, so that he might "expiate his Whiggism by performing services from which bigoted Tories, stained with the blood of Russell and Sidney, shrank in horror;" and then again was ready to sell himself to the Prince of Orange, on James's downfall. (ii., pp. 89, 200.)

Jeffreys, a man whose character needs no com-

ment, and who was made by James Lord Chancellor.

Sir Robert Sawyer, Attorney-General—"the stain of innocent blood was common to him with almost all the eminent public men of those evil days." (iii. p. 134.)

But possibly the VERACITIES had fled to Scotland, and thence flooded the whole kingdom with such light—as to make the English peccadilloes mere spots in the British sun. The facts hardly confirm the supposition. In one place Macaulay speaks of the "infamous triumvirs who had been in the short space of a year, violent Williamites and violent Jacobites, became Williamites again, and attempted to make their peace with the Government by accusing each other" (iii., p. 217); while in another he deals with the case of Breadalbane, a supposed accomplice in the crime of Glencoe. It was discovered that the earl, while distributing King William's money among the Highland chiefs, had professed the warmest zeal for the interest of James. "Breadalbane's defence was that he was a greater villain than his accusers imagined, and that he had pretended to be a Jacobite only in order to get at the bottom of the Jacobite plans. In truth, the depths of this man's knavery were unfathomable. It was impossible to say which of his treasons were, to borrow the Italian classification, single treasons, and which double treasons. On this occasion the parliament

supposed him to have been guilty only of a single treason, and sent him to the Castle of Edinburgh. The Government on full consideration, gave credit to his assertion that he had been guilty of a double treason, and let him out again." (iv., p. 95.)

Reading all this, does the Reviewer feel his indignation at the conduct of the authors a little mollified? Is he gradually, however slowly, coming to the conviction that if things *were so*, there *must* have been, as he says, "more lies told in England during the reign of the Deliverer, than in all the rest of the world since history was?" Or has he only yet gone so far as to acknowledge—that at all events there must have been a good many such lies? No matter! Courage and patience will soon bring us both to the same goal.

But I fancy he still pins his faith on the "*Deliverer*." Well, if he will deliver him, I too will go a long way with the Reviewer in his charming trustfulness. Macaulay has given us his brief but pregnant history of corruption up to the time of William's accession to power, and let us now see how the Deliverer delivered England from that. He begins well—in words: "Nobody hates bribery more than I," said King William to Bishop Burnet. "But I have to do with a set of men who must be managed in this vile way or not at all. I must strain a point, or the country is lost."

The point "strained" was to place Caermarthen "at the head of the internal administration of the realm" when "A COMPLETE CHANGE TOOK PLACE . . . He had sixteen years before succeeded Clifford at the Treasury, had inherited Clifford's tactics, had improved upon them, and had employed them to an extent which would have amazed the inventor. From the day in which Caermarthen was called a second time to the chief direction of affairs, parliamentary corruption continued to be practised, with scarcely any intermission, by a long succession of statesmen, till the close of the American war." (iii. pp. 144—5.) After this, the *Deliverer*, I think, needs very much himself to be delivered.

I shall only add to this, the dramatic case of Trevor, Speaker of the House of Commons, whose guilt was punished in a manner that must have been equally pleasing to the most malignant and the most enjoyable of satirists. His legitimate emoluments "amounted to above four thousand a year, but it was believed he had pocketed at least ten thousand a year. . . . Yet great as were the offences of this bad man, his punishment was fully proportioned to them. As soon as the report of the committee had been read, it was moved that he had been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour. He had to stand up and put the question. There was a loud cry of 'Aye.' He called on the Noes; and scarcely a voice was

heard. He was forced to declare that the Ayes had it." (iv., p. 83.)

What a scene ! Imagine a Reviewer in a similar position ; not, of course, the estimable gentleman I am dealing with—but some Reviewer—obliged to read in public his own false statements, and the author's disproof to them—and receive the verdict "Guilty !" Would heaven and earth come together, I wonder ?

Is the glow of full satisfaction—that dearest of pleasures to the cultivated artist, whether it refers to his own or to other men's works, cheering the Reviewer at last ? But, stop—I beg his pardon—I quite forgot about the *plots—counterplots—sticks—every spy with another spy behind his back, &c., &c.* And if I could be quite sure I had re-established my character in his eyes as a conscientious workman, however mistaken at times in my modes of work, I should simply say, and there stop—that there is not one incident in the book—however melodramatic it may seem to those who have forgotten or never knew what the latter part of the seventeenth century was, but I undertake to find a fair counterpart for—if not indeed the very same—in Macaulay, or in other books dealing with the time.

Still, if the Reviewer has not read Macaulay, or read him only as he has read the "Lion in the Path," it is hardly fair perhaps to tax his benevolence in matters of faith ; so I have culled from

the historian some additional passages with which I shall close my chapter ; passages which may throw light not only on the topics yet left untouched, and therefore still a trouble to the Reviewer's mind, but enable me to indicate whence I drew the first notion of the characters of the spy Maria, and the Chief of the Police, who exercises over her so baleful an influence.

Plots and plotting appear to the Reviewer to be as uncommon at the end of the seventeenth century as unverity ; and very wicked plots would of course, to him, be impossible at so truthful a time. Well, I won't contradict him ; and if Macaulay does, let him bear the blame. "It may be doubted," says the audacious historian, referring to Fuller's plot, which was only less celebrated than the Popish plot of Titus Oates, "whether in our country, any man ever, before the year 1678, invented and related on oath a circumstantial history, altogether fictitious, of a treasonable plot, for the purpose of making himself important by destroying men who had given him no provocation. But in the year 1678, this execrable crime became the fashion, AND CONTINUED TO BE SO DURING THE TWENTY YEARS WHICH FOLLOWED." (iii. p. 314.)

I shall give one specimen of these plots to illustrate, in connection with the "stick" of the novel, the kind of artifices used ; and their importance.

Young was a man of infamous character, who had been four or five times in the pillory, but who was "master of a weapon which is, of all weapons, the most formidable to innocence"—the power of so counterfeiting handwriting that the most experienced clerks could scarcely discover any difference between his imitations and the originals. He accordingly invented, on paper, an 'Association for the Restoration of the Banished King,' and appended to the document the names of Marlborough, of Cornbury, of Salisbury, of Sancroft, and of Sprat, Bishop of Rochester.

Then he employed a "wretch named Blackhead, who had been formerly convicted of perjury, and sentenced to have his ears clipped," to go to Sprat's palace at Bromley, introduce himself there as the confidential servant of an imaginary Doctor of Divinity, and deliver to the bishop, on bended knee, a letter ingeniously manufactured by Young. He went; and "received with a semblance of profound reverence, the episcopal benediction." In return for which—not being able to get into any of the private apartments, he dropped the forged document "into a flower pot which stood in a parlour near the kitchen."

Young then "informed the ministers that he could tell them something of the highest importance to the welfare of the State, and earnestly begged to be

heard." He and his accomplice were brought before the Privy Council. They there accused Marlborough and the others of high treason, and said that an instrument signed by the five would be found at Bromley. Young was even bold enough to request that the Bishop's flower pots should be examined, but did not venture to indicate any particular room. The search consequently failed. The bishop however was arrested—Marlborough having already been sent to the Tower.

Then the paper was taken away by Blackhead, and a fresh lie invented to enable one of Young's two wives to carry it to the Secretary's office. But the ministers had by this time regained their senses. Blackhead, being severely examined, confessed all he had done; and Young, after a fresh attempt to brazen the matter out, was tried, sentenced, and pilloried for the fifth or sixth time, and underwent from the mob, such a "pelting as had seldom been known." (iii., pp. 349, 353.)

Now as to "*Spies*." "In spite of all his [King William's] precautions, Mary well knew that he was not strictly faithful to her. *Spies* and tale-bearers—encouraged by her father, did their best to inflame her resentment." (ii., p. 7.)

So James, to begin with, "encouraged" the tribe. Perhaps the story we are about to tell from Macaulay which shows James's wife doing the same

thing, may be more interesting to the Reviewer, from the fact that it deals with two of his complaints at once—tricks of the "stick" order—and the *every spy "having another spy behind his back."*

"In the spring of 1690, Mary of Modena wished to send to her correspondents in London some highly important despatches. As these despatches were too bulky to be concealed in the clothes of a single messenger, it was necessary to employ two confidential persons. Fuller was one:" the Fuller already mentioned, a man who "was thought at St. Germain's to be a devoted servant of the House of Stuart. In truth, however, he had, in the course of one of his expeditions to London, sold himself to the new Government."

Fuller's companion was "a zealous young Jacobite named Crone. Before they set out they received full instructions from the Queen herself. Not a scrap of paper was to be detected about them by an ordinary search; but their **BUTTONS** contained letters written in **INVISIBLE INK**.

"The pair proceeded to Calais. The governor of that town furnished them with a boat, which under cover of the night, set them on the low marshy coast of Kent, near the lighthouse of Dungeness. They walked to a farmhouse, procured horses and took different roads to London. Fuller [the spy behind the spy] hastened to the palace at Kensington,

and delivered the documents with which he was charged into the King's hand. The first letter which William unrolled seemed to contain only florid compliments, but a pan of charcoal was lighted, a liquid well known to the diplomatists of that age [and to their King] was applied to the paper: an unsavoury steam filled the closet, and lines full of grave meaning began to appear."

The first thing to be done was to secure Crone. He "had unfortunately had time to deliver his letters before he was caught." And the news flew fast through London, and spread dismay among all the persons who were implicated.

"The spirits of the Jacobites rose, however, when it was known that Crone, though repeatedly interrogated by those who had him in their power, and though assured that nothing but a frank confession could save his life, had resolutely continued silent. . . . A woman named Clifford, with whom he had lodged, and who was one of the most active and cunning agents of the Jacobite faction, was intrusted with the duty of keeping him steady to the cause."

When Crone's trial came on, there was among the twelve jurymen one on whom the Jacobites thought they could depend. "Nor were they altogether mistaken, for this man held out against his eleven companions all night, and half the next day;

and he would probably have starved them into submission, had not Mrs. Clifford, who was in league with him, been caught throwing sweetmeats to him through the window."

He was found guilty and condemned to death, but told that "the Government was willing to spare him if he would earn his pardon by full confession. The struggle in his mind was terrible and doubtful. At one time Mrs. Clifford, who had access to his cell [acting therefore for William] reported to the Jacobite chiefs [acting therefore for James] that he was in a great agony. He could not die he said; he was too young to be a martyr. The next morning she found him cheerful and resolute." But at the last moment—when all was ready for his execution—the crowd waiting for him—he yielded, and gave important information. (iii., pp. 166—173.)

The Reviewer may find here the original of Maria the spy, whom it was desired to show as having dim glimpses of a better life—chiefly through her love for George Osborne,—but compelled to go on to her final destruction by the inexorable cruelty of her chief, Hugh Speke. That the pecuniary encouragements lavished upon her as a spy, are in no respect overcharged in the novel, may be seen from the Government's treatment of Fuller; which "enabled him to live during some months like a fine gentleman. He called himself a Colonel—hired servants,

clothed them in gorgeous liveries, bought fine horses, lodged in Pall Mall, and showed his brazen forehead overtopped by a wig worth fifty guineas, in the antechamber of the palace, and in the stage box at the theatre." He followed William to Ireland and then to the Congress of Princes at the Hague. "The vagabond afterwards boasted, that at the Hague, he appeared with a retinue fit for an ambassador; that he gave ten guineas a week for an apartment; and that the worst waistcoat which he condescended to wear was of silver stuff at forty shillings the yard." (iii., p. 315.)

Nothing, I imagine, would be more interesting than a faithful picture of the spy system in operation during the whole of the period in question, if the materials were obtainable. But obviously every Government desired to keep its dirty work as little known as possible. Hence the immense importance of a zealous and able chief. I chose for this position a real person—a most unpleasantly interesting one. This was Hugh Speke, a "man of good family, but of a singularly base and depraved nature. His love of mischief, and of dark and crooked ways, amounted almost to madness. To cause confusion without being found out was his business and his pastime; and he had a rare skill in using honest enthusiasts as the instruments of his cold-blooded malice. He had attempted by means of one of

his puppets to fasten on Charles and James the crime of murdering Essex in the Tower." (i. p. 368.)

During the crisis of 1688 he issued a forged and truculent proclamation against Papists, under the supposed hand and seal of the Prince of Orange, which "has been preserved from oblivion by the skilful audacity with which it was written, and by the immense effect which it produced." Twenty-seven years later he avowed the forgery, and demanded a reward from the House of Brunswick, for the service he had rendered the Protestant religion, while boldly avowing, that at the very same time he had pretended to James he was estranged from his party "and had promised to act as a spy upon them—that he had thus obtained admittance to the royal closet, had vowed fidelity, had been promised large pecuniary rewards, and had procured blank passes which enabled him to travel backwards and forwards across the hostile lines." (ii., pp. 177—8.)

I need only add to this portrait that when Trenchard became Secretary of State to William, "he had constantly at his side Hugh Speke and Aaron Smith—men to whom a hunt after a Jacobite was the most exciting of all sports." And that from that time "there was a constant bustle at the Secretary's office, a constant stream of informers [who were obviously spies] coming in, and of messengers with warrants going out." (iv., p. 67.)

And now in conclusion, can I do better than try to imitate the grace, the point, the serenity of the Reviewer's last words, while praying to Heaven that I may not unwittingly disturb his state of "exceeding peace?" It must do one's own soul good to be generous with such a man. So I shall quote the passage a second time:—" *Seeing that the authors ascribe certain lines of Marvell's to Andrew Maxwell, we are led to fear that they are not particularly accurate observers; and this gives us hope that their picture of English veracity at the end of the seventeenth century may be, to some extent, unfounded.*"

Was ever righteous indignation more lovingly conveyed? Was ever a thrust—that could only be deadly—more charmingly delivered? In point of art it reminds one of Chaucer's

"Smiler with the knife under the cloak."

What then can I say likely to be of the least benefit to me? "The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo."

There is one comfort, however, suggested by another line from the same poet:—what if I trust to that?—

"And Truth ye shall deliver, it is no dread."

"*Seeing,*" then, that the Authors did NOT ascribe certain lines of Marvell's to Andrew Maxwell, and,

as I have shown, could not possibly have done so ;—

"*Seeing*" that the Reviewer could find no plot where Lord Macaulay and Mr. Tom Taylor found a very good one ;—

"*Seeing*" that unfortunately it did not occur to him that reading the authors' book was necessary ;—

"*Seeing*" that all his querulous diminutives vanish like smoke at the merest puff ;—

"*Seeing*" that the latter part of the seventeenth century *was* a lying and corrupt, and in many respects most infamous time, seething with plots and counter-plots ; with intrigues, spies and tricks of every kind ;—

"*Seeing*" all this, I am "*led to fear that*" it is the Reviewer who does not belong to the class of "*particularly accurate observers ; and this gives me hope that his picture of English authorship towards the end of the nineteenth century may be, to some extent, unfounded.*"

other hand, he had some idea of kingly grace ; and studied how he could personally influence the more important of the men who were brought into contact with him. His habits and success in this way led to the use of a by-word—the king had “ closeted ” such and such a person. He was above middle height, with limbs robust and well-proportioned ; the face long, the complexion fair, and not in itself unpleasing, if only the darker and more sinister emotions were for the time absent from it.

Such was the man of whom, as Duke of York, Andrew Marvell wrote prophetically :—

With the Turk in his head and the Pope in his heart,
Father Patrick's disciple will make England smart.
If he e'er be king, I know Britain's doom—
We must all to a stake, or be converts to Rome.

James has been king, has tried the policy so graphically described, has sent bishops wholesale to the Tower, and himself been sent out of the country. As Britain declined to accept the poet's doom, James had, with the aid of France, raised the banner of civil war in Ireland, and been defeated by sea and land, at La Hogue, and on the banks of the Boyne.

And now the unhappy monarch, after a time of depression, is reviving ; but has something else to think of beside the Pope and the mortifications of La Trappe, whence he has lately come ; for the death of his daughter Mary, a few months before,

has re-opened, so he thinks, the way back to that Whitehall he so ignominiously left.

The new comer presently entered, following the courtier who had been sent to lead him into the royal presence; the two bowing several times with deep reverences as they approached; the king, meanwhile, advancing, when the young soldier would have knelt, to take his hand, and arrest the motion, saying, in language obviously intended to impress strongly on the young man's mind the kingly character of the speaker,—

“No, my lord; we forbid! Kneel not to us. Who and what are we? A sort of ‘mockery king of snow!’” And the monarch glanced, with a sad smile, at the ermined robe he wore, and at the vases filled with white roses (the darling emblem or “favour” of the Jacobites), which were freshly placed on the palace tables every morning. “Yes, my lord, a ‘mockery king of snow’ was our unfortunate predecessor, Richard the Second, to use the words of our own noble and loyal poet, Shakespeare; and a ‘mockery king of snow’ we, too, seemingly, must be content to remain! Well, we bend in dutiful submission, if this indeed be the final decree of Heaven.”

When he again spake, it was in more natural tones and language.

THE
LION IN THE PATH

An Historical Romance.

BY
THE AUTHORS OF "ABEL DRAKE'S WIFE"
AND "GIDEON'S ROCK."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON :
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Cecil no more by courtesy, but the Earl of Norwood in your own right, a title conferred on you as son of the DUKE OF BRIDGEMINSTER, to whom we now again confirm the sequestered Norwood estates of this rebel, in acknowledgment of his and your great services to the nation, and to my family !”

Father and son alike prostrated themselves in gratitude ; and, in the enjoyment of their new dignities, forgot Hermia, and all the backbitings and hatreds of the Jacobite party—once their own.

“ And now,” continued the king, “ I have but little to say beyond this—a speedy trial, sentence, and execution !”

He paused a minute or two, and then added, in a remarkable tone :

“ I shall esteem that man or woman my most disloyal subject who ventures to ask—or to allow others to ask, through him—for clemency towards so desperate a rebel. Fortune has put him into my hands, and I will not—no,” he ejaculated, with a solemn, upward look, “ I will not peril my own or my people’s quiet by leaving it possible for him to raise the banner of rebellion once more. My lords and gentlemen, I do not doubt but that my words find an echo in all your hearts. Is it not so ?”

“ All—all, your majesty !” was the universal response.

"The truth is, sire," said the Earl of Bridgminster—or, to give him his future title, the Duke—"we had all been consulting among ourselves on this very matter; and, knowing your majesty's kindness of heart, were about to address to you a unanimous request to do the very thing that your majesty, as a consummate statesman and true father of his people, has already determined upon!"

"I am truly glad of this. Now, indeed, I feel strong in my purpose, and you may all rest assured I shall abide by it."

"May it please your majesty to bend your eyes for one moment away from the mightier cares of the state, to give your grateful servant counsel on a matter personal to myself?"

"Certainly—certainly, your grace! Speak, and speak freely!"

"Has your majesty yet heard that this unfortunate man is, in a certain slight way, related to myself?"

"Related to you?" The king's small eyes twinkled uneasily, as he ruminated on what this new fact might mean.

"As a boy, he was married to my daughter Hermia, then, also, a mere child."

"Is it possible! Is it possible! I have heard vague rumours of some romantic love story of this kind, but never did I believe them true."

"Unhappily, they are so far true that he—even





